Data:

We now have **258** high schools and ATCs registered for IT Academy in KY!

Make sure you are also a testing site with Certiport so your students can certify!

Hour of Code SUCCESS

The Hour of Code was a huge success because of you! Thanks for all you did last week for your students. I hope it sparked an interest within them to pursue this growing career option. Also, thanks to everyone who shared pictures of your students! If you haven't already seen them, check out our Twitter account to see some excited, engaged students!

IT Academy Highlighted in "*Kentucky Teacher*"

Check out the article in "***Kentucky Teacher***" where some of our schools and programs were highlighted.

Preparing to Test Students

There has been some confusion around *where* to go to take the exams. Some very important points to remember:

- The online management portal (Certiport.com) is where you run reports, manage associations, create exam groups, activate your site license, find the Console 8 software download, Quick Reference Guides, etc.
- Console 8 is the testing engine for all Microsoft exams and where you and your students will go to actually take your tests. (This should be downloaded on any computer used for testing.)
- Ann has created a PowerPoint and a pdf called "Test Day and Proctoring" that will help clarify some of the confusion. You can find it **here**.

Certiport created a site for Kentucky that provides information and tips you might need. It offers access instruction for each phase of implementation. Check out **Kentucky's Certiport site**.

Kentucky IT Academy and

This year's state STLP competition will be April 22 at Rupp Arena in Lexington. We are hosting an IT Academy event for students that day; so keep watching for details on how to get your students involved. The event will be a "qualifier" for Certiport's World Champion Competition where students can win cash scholarships. At the close of the event, we will also recognize the top certifying IT Academy schools. Associate Commissioner David Couch and other dignitaries will be there to showcase the great things you are accomplishing in your school.
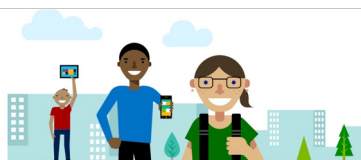
New Training Opportunities

Kick off 2016 by committing to learn more about IT Academy and Certiport!
Click on one of the following links to register for a training session:

[Jan. 11, 2016, South Warren Co. High, 4:00-6:00 pm CST](#)

[Jan. 19, 2016, Pulaski Co. High, 4:00-6:00 pm EST](#)

[Jan. 26, 2016, Thomas Nelson High, Bardstown, 4:00-6:00 pm EST](#)

Monthly "Office Hours"

One Tuesday per month, 3:30 – 4:30 ET, Microsoft, Certiport and Laura will be on a Skype call for you to ask questions, get ideas and collaborate. If you need access to the link to the call, please email Laura.

The Microsoft IT Academy program will be renamed to **Microsoft Imagine Academy** effective January 11th, 2016. This name change is part of Microsoft's transformation in the way they reach and impact students in the education space. With this change, [Microsoft Imagine](#) will be the single identity used for all Microsoft programs, tools and initiatives aimed at students to drive technology, computer science, coding and employability skills.

As a part of this change, in January they will transition to providing customers' access to a digital Microsoft Imagine Academy Welcome Kit to enable easier and on demand access to all program marketing materials and resources. They will also provide a new Microsoft Imagine Academy logo. They encourage you to start using it right away however Microsoft is providing six months transition time to allow customers to update marketing assets to the new Microsoft Imagine Academy logo.

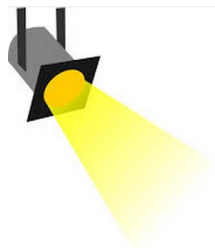## The 2016 MOS U.S. National Championship: Bigger Than Ever!

Certiport is excited to announce the launch of the 2016 Microsoft Office Specialist U.S. National Championship. This year will be bigger and better than ever, with more states participating, more invitations being sent, and more scholarships to win!

To get more students involved, invitations will be extended in both the fall and the spring. Getting students certified early means that they can qualify early to participate in the Championship. Here are the important dates to remember:
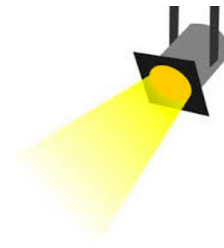
- MOS U.S. National Championship Fall Qualifier: June 16, 2015-December 18, 2015.
- MOS U.S. National Championship Spring Qualifier: December 19, 2015-May 13, 2016

Even better, a new year also means a new look, feel, and website as well. Learning more about the competition, downloading promotional materials, and asking questions has never been easier!

Visit **http://www.moschampionship.com/us/states/kentucky/** to find out more and get your students involved today.

Spotlight:

Larry A. Ryle High School, Union

Story by Lora Evans, MOS-Honors Teacher

We have been offering Microsoft Office Specialist Certifications for thirteen years. June Madison (retired) is credited with starting our program in 2002 with the support of our then Principal, the late Randy Cooper and fellow business teacher, Ruth Davis (retired). Mr. Cooper understood the value of teaching our students current technology and graciously provided us with the start-up funding. Thanks to Mrs. Madison's initiative and Mr. Cooper's support, Ryle High School has been a leader in MOS testing for over a decade.

We currently offer MOS Certification for the following 2013 Microsoft Programs: Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and Access. We pride ourselves on being one of the few high schools that offer Access Certification and I encourage all Kentucky schools to make the effort to do so. I strongly believe it sets students apart from the rest when it comes to getting jobs, internships, and college credit.

Our statistics for the 2014-15 academic year were outstanding. We had 102 students enrolled in MOS-Honors with 94 percent earning Industry Certification (earned at least three certifications) and 92 percent earning all four certifications. Our students, parents, teachers, and administration recognize the significance of achieving MOS Certifications and fully support all of my endeavors when it comes to teaching and testing.

Ryle runs on a six-period day with classes lasting the entire academic year. I have my students for 49 minutes/day. Each quarter I teach one Microsoft program and certify students in that program. Starting next year, I will begin with Excel certification and then move on to Word certification before the winter Break. During the third quarter, my students will prepare for and take the PowerPoint exam. Fourth quarter may seem like an inopportune time to teach and certify for Access, but I explain to the students "it's the icing on the cake". Most students realize this is an excellent opportunity and not only take the certification exam, but they also pass with flying colors.

I make sure students are ready to take the certification exam in several ways. First, we use the Shelley Cashman series and incorporate curriculum from both the Advanced and Post-Advanced textbooks. We work through chapter projects, several end of chapter assignments, and take formative chapter quizzes using the SAM software. My students also take quarterly and semester exams using SAM in addition to completing the G-Metrix test prep software before sitting for an exam. Recently, I have transformed my course into a flipped-style classroom by using the IT Academy Learning Plans. I have the students review the interactive videos related to our upcoming lesson at home before we start the chapter in class. I have found this method gives the students a chance to introduce themselves to new subject matter at their own pace and makes them better prepared for the class discussion and assignments.

If you feel that you are not experiencing the success you had hoped to achieve, I would focus more time on assessing what topics students seem especially weak. Often, I will use my projector and do the chapter projects with the class so I can clear up any misunderstandings immediately. Since I have taken certification exams in Word, PowerPoint, Access, and Excel since 2003, I have a grasp on where students encounter the most problems and make a special effort to address their needs. I also recommend taking each of the certification exams before your students, even if you have already been certified. Refreshing your memory will help you better prepare your students for the some of the idiosyncrasies of the test.

Here are some testimonials I have received from students who completed the course:

"Please convince your students to become Microsoft Office Certified. They can test out of a CIS class. But they really need Access to pass this test because it's mostly Excel and Access. It'll really help them when college comes around!" *–Emily Hugenberg, Ryle Graduate, Current University of Louisville student*

"Recently I adopted a second major, Information Systems (IS) to go along with my Accounting track. This basically means that for the next two semesters I will be taking IS classes that involve Access and Excel. I just wanted you to know how much of a JOKE these classes are to me, and that it is all thanks to your class. I feel like the 'smartest kid in school' in these courses. It's wild to watch other students try these labs that we are doing, most of them couldn't even do a simple filter/sort on an Excel document. Please feel free to quote me on this to any students who appear to be as hardheaded as I was. So far, MOS has been the single most useful class that I took in high school." *–Kyle Sullivan, Ryle Graduate, Current University of Cincinnati student*

Data Points for November:

The number of schools signed up for membership: 258

The number of registered testing centers: 225

The number of Excel certifications for the month: 251

The number of Excel certification year-to-date: 433

The number of MTA certifications for the month: 12

The number of MTA certifications year-to-date: 76

The number of online courses started: 24,562

The number of online courses completed: 6,991

The top 10 certifying sites:

1. Clark Co. ATC	6. Bath Co. High
2. Breckinridge Co. ATC	7. Hart Co. High
3. Dixie Heights High, Kenton Co.	8. Larry Ryle High, Boone Co.
4. Highlands High, Ft. Thomas Ind.	9. Calloway Co. High
5. Simon Kenton High, Kenton Co.	10. North Bullitt Co. High

Is your school listed here?

MOS Master Certifications

We have **three** people so far who have earned MOS Master Certification in Kentucky! They are:

- Dylan Tungate – Technology Integration Specialist in the Marion County school district
- Michael Smeltzer – Student at Dixie Heights High School in Kenton Co.
- Mike Crowhurst – Teacher at Pulaski County High School

CONGRATULATIONS!

Follow KY IT Academy on Twitter

@KYITAcademy

KDE's KY ITA Website!

Check out the Microsoft Resources folder and the Certiport Resources folder - they both have lots of "How To" documents that will help you navigate the IT Academy site. There is also a new webinar available: "**Webinar for the New IT Academy Website**" you may want to watch.

As always, if you need any assistance with your school's program, please reach out to Laura, Megan, or Ann. We are here to help make your year as successful as possible!